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AYSIDE
ERSES



CLYDE BROWNE

BAYSIDE VERSES

BY
CLYDE BROWNE



FROM THE PRESS OF
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DAVID I

DAVID I

J. H. Carrington, 1830

To the Memory of
CARROLL CARRINGTON
This Booklet
Is Respectfully Dedicated
By
His Pupil in Letters.

Entered According to Act of Congress
In the Year 1903
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By Clyde Browne.

APOLOGY.

WA

HILE pining in the
Redwood Land,
In sundry lonely
hours,
I idly took my pen in
hand

To try my rhyming pow'rs.

Strive as I might to frame a thought
That others might enjoy,
My meditations conjured naught
To please one—nor annoy.

But ever by the changing tide,
That waits to bear me home,
The rhymes would rough-shod o'er me
ride—
Enough to fill a tome.

So I, perforce, have given here
The thoughts that seemed the best,

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BAYSIDE VERSES

A ONE TIME HOME OF GRANT.

A

STRANGER on the Hum-
boldt Bay,
Who might, on this, a mod-
ern day,
Desire to find in all the
West

The spot of greatest interest,
Would never pick on one that here
Surmounts a hill remote and drear,
Where in the stages of decay
A ruined house fast molds away.

Nor would he dream that rotting frame
Once had a man of such great fame
As U. S. Grant as resident,
Before he served as President.
And yet it did. But few remain
Who knew him here when he was plain,
Plain Captain Grant, and those will say
But little of that early day

When Grant was here in manhood's
prime
And here remained a two years' time.

Upon that day the ruined frame
Was proud to own a prouder name.
Fort Humboldt then was better kept,
But now they care for naught except
The ancient name. To hear them speak
Of that old relic, frail and weak,
You needs must think its bastions still
Frown down from some commanding
hill,
Filling with awe the youth and sage,
Who knowledge seek in this wise age.

But where embattlements should stand
Is brushy growth, and weeds, and sand.
Where once the troops were garrisoned,
In warlike way caparisoned,
Where beating drums assembled round
A goodly band on muster ground,
A silence, like of lonely tomb,
Gives it an air of graveyard gloom.

Where once the brave and hardy strode,
Is now the scarcely-viewed abode
Of bats, and owls, and creeping things,
And in the night the whirring wings
Sweep in and out the casements, bare
Of glass or else, and revel there,
As reveled in the nights of old—
Arrayed in blue and braids of gold—
The fighting men, whose merry song
Was joined by all the gathered throng.

Where now the hootowl's doleful moan
Sounds in the ruins sad and lone,
Once was exultant music's strain
The sound that floated o'er the plain,
And gliding feet the rythm felt
Where only bravest manhood dwelt.

As through the crevices, that ope
For egress of the snails that grope,
The storm wind of the winter howls,
Coyotes gape their putrid jowls
And loud their dire rejoicings swell,

Like anguished shrieks from lowest
hell.

That is the Fort that stands today
Above the waters of the bay,
Growing each year a little worse,
As though it bears some awful curse
That dooms it to be scorned of men
Till leveled to the earth again.

Grant, in his "Memoirs," mentioned not
That he had known this lonely spot.
Perchance he felt a certain shame
At thoughts of even Humboldt's name.
Be as it may, he soldiered here
In that same Fort that long-gone year.
And of what little now is said
By gray-haired settlers, one is lead
To think that in his younger days
Ulysses caused a ruddy haze
To permeate the village, where
He spent the time he had to spare.
And eke they hint at tables green,

And dice, and cards, and drinks be-
tween,
And hectic revels o'er the glass
That helps the weary time to pass;
Of trysts with maids of low degree—
The dusky aborigine.

They hint at all such lowly things
That thoughts akin to anguish brings
To one who cares to know no wrong
Of one in loyal hearts so strong,
For Grant is dear as few are dear
To all, and few will lend an ear
To tales of doings indiscreet—
To tales that none should e'er repeat.
Better to leave them all unsaid,
And they will die as Grant is dead.

Upon a hill 'twixt town and sea
The ruins stand. A gnarled pine tree
Has grown amain before the door,
Where sentries stood in days of yore,
And waves its verdant needles where
The stars and stripes once fanned the

air,

And moans for dead and bygone days,
As softly through its branches plays
The wailing wind from o'er the bar,
That bears its moans and sighs afar.

Beneath the hill a road winds round,
And farmers, on their way to town,
Keep on the place an anxious eye,
As though they feared to e'en go by.
The plodding horse e'en looks askance,
Casts on the spot a fearful glance,
And as he draws the ruins near,
Hurries by with a snort of fear.
But in the night the bravest fail
To pass the place without a quail,
For they assert a potent spell,
That chills belike a fun'ral knell,
Wafts from thence like soaring death,
To chill one with its grewsome breath.

Fie on ye, folk, that you should wait
While sinks the Fort in such a state!
Out from your heedless dreams awake

And once again Fort Humboldt made
The pride of all—the stronghold old
That once a soldier hero held.
Mighty was he, though not just then,
When he was much like other men.
But Grant was Grant, and Humboldt
Fort
Should not be left to tempests' sport,
To owls, and bats, and things unclean,
To mold beneath the mosses green.

Ruins are fair, when far away
One views them, through the distance
gray.

Their mellow outlines 'gainst the sky
Are blent with clouds that wander by
In duns and golds and deepest blues,
But in the north are soberer hues,
For Nature's pigments ran near out
Ere she had gone the land about.
Here in the North are quiet tones,
While in the kinder, warmer zones
There lies a flush o'er lands and skies,
And each one with the other vies

To see whose bright charmelian hue
Will please the most who cares to
view.

Ruins are fair sometimes, but these
Some lonely stroller mayhap sees
And, disappointed, wonders why
They do not let the old name die,
Or else repair the shaky frame
And keep it as they keep its name.
If once again the roof were thatched,
The windows set, the clapboards
matched,
The doors replaced, and weeds removed,
The ones who love it will have proved
They love it well. And then with pride
Let them plant at the pine tree's side
A goodly mast, whereon can wave
The well-loved banner of the brave—
The ensign bold whose crimson bars
And azure flecked with silv'ry stars—
That may be seen from Bay and Town,
And all the vessels sailing down
To breast the bar would colors dip.

'Twould give them luck upon their trip.

And let a worthy man be there
To give the place his honest care.
And when the shades of night would
fall,

Then could he wind a bugle call.
'Twere better far that "taps" should
sound

To spread a loyal thrill around
Than that the owl's malignant cry
Should float away and then reply
To echoes drear from o'er the bay,
And from the distant hills away.



THE MAKER OF TAMALES.

In the land of giant redwoods,
Where the hungry, gnawing bandsaw
Croons from early morn till even,
Where they only talk of lumber
And of ships that journey, laden
With the produce of the sawmills—

In that land is an oasis,
Like a green spot on the desert.

From the land of rest and music,
Where the twanging of guitarros
In the hands of caballeros
Waft upon the air in moonlight,
Where the senorita coyly
Hides her face to veil the blushes
With her silken, fringed revosa,
Came a maker of tamales.

O'er the valleys and the mountains,
Up the sea along the Westland,
Where the surf beats on the shingle,
Where the breakers lash the headlands,
Where the air is damper, cooler,
Came the maker of tamales
To the log-filled Bay of Humboldt,
To the City of Eureka.

In the sound of buzzing sawmills
Started he a place for making
Such a morsel as the Northmen

Ne'er had wot of, or partaken.
The ingredlents he garnered
From the meadow and the farmyard,
And the oriental pickers
Plucked for him the pimiente,
And the peons o'er the mountains
Culled for him the ripest chilis.

On the muchly-used piedro
Ground he maiz that well had softened,
And he mixed it with the chili,
And un poco de gallina,
And an olive that was taken
From the tree ere it had ripened
And its coat had turned to sable.

Took he then the fragrant mixture,
And encompassed it in cornhusks,
Wrapped it well and tied it tightly
With a fragment of the cover
That was strongest and the sweetest,
Steamed he then the yellow morsel
O'er a vessel where the cornsilk

Simmered so it lent its fragrance
To the husk and corn it loved so.

Thus he made his famed tamales
For the people of the Northland,
And the Northmen, and the strangers,
And the Northland youths and maidens
Gather there beyond the twilight
For the well-beloved tamale.

In the even, while the incense
Of gallina, corn and chili
Hover round the throng expectant,
Floats there out from deeper shadows
Sounds of music of the Southland,
And the undulating rythm
And the incense of tamales
Float together as for ages
They have floated in the Southland,
Where the very air is music
And the air is heavy-laden
Wnth the incense of tamales.

THE OLD CRAFT AND THE NEW.

There sails a craft o'er the murm'ring
wave

In sight of the western strand.

There lies a wreck that awaits a grave
In the silently shifting sand.

One is a bride, caressing the sea

With many a fervent kiss,

Climbing the swell with a youthful glee
And leaping o'er each abyss.

And one is a mossy and battered craft

That lies by the moaning bar,

Dead to the days when the same seas
laughed

At her pranks in the seas afar.

But once she had worn her bridal veil,

When she sprang to the bridegroom's
breast.

Then she was young; she was blithe
and hale,

With never a thought of rest.

And once she had danced from shore
to shore,

And gamboled in distant seas,
Laughing at calms and at tempests'
roar,

And wooing the fresh'ning breeze.

But now she rests by the fickle deep,
Embraced by the moss and weeds,
Sleeping as only the tired can sleep
To rest from their life-long deeds.

And ever the song that the sad winds
sing

Is of rest—and rest—and rest.

A peace to the tired will the sand grave
bring

To the hulk on the sea-beat West.

What of the bride of the groom, the
sea,

That spreads out her snowy wings
And flies to the blue in an ecstasy,

Nor cares what the wild wind sings?

Perhaps she will pause in her happy
flight

With a tear for the one asleep.

Perhaps none will mourn but the
stormy night,

Which will weep—and weep—and
weep.

Off where the sea and the sky are wed

The young craft bounds away,

With never a care where her ways are
sped,

Nor whence at the close of day.

Whose is the brush that can well por-
tray

This picture beside the sea,

Of death and the craft that molds
away,

Of life and the one care-free?

THE PENINSULA.

A narrow strip of drifting sand,
Between the bay and sea,
Juts from the northern, wooded land,
And seems to me to be
A spectre finger, pointing back
Along the steamer-trodden track,
Hiding the oaken bones that stack
Upon the hidden lea.

Down from the woods in winters' floods
The fallen giants dash,
Unmindful how the spoondrift scuds,
Or how the tempests lash,
And seek to ride the mighty deep,
A menace to the crafts that creep,
To climb its peaks, its valleys leap—
Yet on the sandspit crash.

The thin peninsula prevails
To stay the ocean's wrath.
It stands against the wintry gales,
Nor knows it aught of scath.

The waves that beat upon the strand
Retreat before its staying hand,
Pondering much that it should stand
For long to block its path.

And still that spectre finger becks,
And points my homeward way.
Mossy with olden vessels' wrecks
That bleach upon the bay,
And pointing southward o'er the foam,
It bids me never more to roam,
But get me to my southern home.
"Begone!" it seems to say.

Have patience, spectre finger; bide
Until the summer's past;
Until upon your seaward side
The waves beat fierce and fast.
Then I will take the path you show,
Nor mind the winds that wildly blow,
Nor stormy tides that ebb and flow,
For calms will come at last.

ON STEAMER DAY.

On steamer day a throng is on the
pier,

Eager to be the last to say fare-
well.

A tender look, a wave, a glist'ning
tear,

And then there rings the pilot's start-
ing bell.

The great "blue Peter," waving at the
head,

Is struck, and slowly draws the craft
away.

Some few last words are shouted, tears
are shed,

And then the steamer hurries down
the bay.

The crowd thins out and soon the dock
is bare,

Except for some lorn souls that wait
to get

A last sad look, and those will linger
there

And kerchiefs wave that with their
tears are wet.

Then those few go, with heavy hearts
and eyes,

And leave but one to shed his tears
alone.

And he weeps on, and gazes through
his sighs,

To seaward, then departs with one
last moan.

The craft has sailed; deserted is the
pier;

The west wind moans and croons
along the bay;

The wheeling gulls swing low and set-
tle near,

And thus it is upon each steamer day.

THE GULL ON THE PILE.

A gray gull mourns on a moss-fringed
pile

For its mate that comes no more.
He wheeled away for a while, a while,
But he stopped by the seal lined
shore.

The west wind bore on its wings that
day


The doomed gull's frenzied cry.
The lone gull heard on the distant bay
And wheeled to the west on high.

The wild surf roared and the cold
winds shrilled,

But naught of her mate was there.
A long, long watch, and her breast
was filled
With a leaden and dire despair.

But yet she longs, on the pile afar,
For the mate who had left her side,

Listing the moan of the fretful bar
And watching the changing tide.



THE REDWOODS IN THE BAY.

How passive in the waters of the bay
The monster redwoods lie! Time
was they flung
Their hardy arms aloft the hills
among,
And kissed the sunlight in the welcome
day.
And they grew green while all around
grew gray.
Ere Christ was born those trees were
far from young.
Yet lived they on, nor moved from
whence they sprung
As passed the years and centuries
away.
But when the woodsman's ringing
blade they felt,

The spell was gone, and with an an-
guished moan,
They struck the earth where ages long
they dwelt,
Falling before the woodsman slight
and lone.
Stopped by a boom, lest far abroad
they'll stray,
They sleep upon the waters of the bay.

HUMBOLDT'S "PLEASANT" CLIME.

Who would remain in lands of low'ring
skies
When but a few short leagues adown
the sea
There is a summer land that seems to
be
But little short of earthly Paradise?
Had I the wings with which the eagle
flies,
I'd stretch my plumes above in fer-
vent glee,

And, shaking fogs, and mists, and
storm-clouds free,
I'd soar in hasts to where that fair land
lies.

Ah, tell me not of Humboldt's pleasant
clime!

Another adjective would I apply.
Perhaps 'tis pleasant in the winter-
time,
But I have watched a summer drear
go by,
And would have known it not had I
not known
The months that passed were naught
but summer's own.

UNLUCKY JIM.

Of all of the Jonahs who ever were
born,
The worst one was Unlucky Jim.

He'd take all the chances, however for-
lorn,

For all of them looked good to him.

No matter how often he'd switch in
his bet,

No matter which side he would pick,
The one he was sure of was certain
to get

Defeat, then Unlucky would kick.

Elections and yacht races, prize fights
and such,

Were where he would back the wrong
end.

His salary dwindled; 'twas not very
much.

He lost what he wanted to spend.

Some "sure thing" he'd think of, and
hoping to win,

He'd go to the Major and say:

"I'll bet you ten dollars——" "I'll take
take your bet, Jim,"

The Major would say right away.

MY BRILLIANT POEM.

What did I care, although the hour was
late?

At last my plodding brain a theme
had caught

That needs must fill the world with
happy thought.

I would to garb it well in verse ornate,
And culled my powers at a rapid rate.

I hurried, somewhat faster than I
ought,

Along the wharf, as metre best I
sought,

Not dreaming of the great surprise in
wait.

A plank was missing, but I knew it
not;

The pinions of the winged steed
fanned my brow.

Right then my brilliant thought I well
forgot,

As fell I through that hole. But any-
how,

Though sorry for my theme's unhappy
lot,
I gained a bath—and cold that lasts
e'en now.



THE FORBIDDEN LAND.

The British vessel Collingrove,
A bark from Chinese Seas,
With all her tackle snugly rove
And manned by all Chinese,
Awaits a cargo by the mill.
Her roomy hold is slow to fill,
Yet toil her sailors with a will,
Like busy working bees.

On sunday, when the droning mill
Is sunk in silent rest,
And all the water front is still
And sailor men are dressed
In gay attire, and rush to seek

The gin mills, where, throughout the
week,

The wind has told them places reek
With steins with foamy crest,

The little Oriental tar
Stands by the landward rail
And hears the shouts from nearby bar,
Or notes the small boy's hale,
But dares not place a foot on shore,
For there they thirst for Chinese gore.
He hopes 'tis but a short time more
Ere they will homeward sail.

The little yellow man looks o'er
The gray forbidden land,
And wonders why the vessel bore
Him hither to this strand.
He hears the small boy's daring jeers,
He hears carousing sailors' cheers,
And something that resembles tears
Falls on his ochre hand.

"Je Cli!" you almost hear him say,

“ Euleka boy, him bad !
If Wun Lung he go sho' today,
Da lilboy he get mad
An' flo him lock, an' callum name,
An' bimeby plenty mo' boy came
An' flo mo' lock, an' alle same
It make me belly sad ! ”

And so upon the fo'c'sl head
He yearns for sailing day.
He hopes to soon be homeward sped
On waters far away.
And o'er his rice, perchance, he'll hold
A session on the Northland cold,
And swear he'll ne'er again unfold
A sail for Humboldt Bay.



THEIR ONE REGRET.

The "Times" crew goes in mourning
on a certain day each year,
And weep and wail and sigh with
one accord,
Because they were not present at the
fatal place, and near
Enough to help to crucify Our Lord.



L'ENVOY.

The hour is late; my ink is low;
My weary hand is growing slow.
No more I'll take my lonely way
Along the shores of Humboldt Bay.
Whatever songs are left unsung,
Whatever praise is left unrun,
Some other tongue and hand may do,
For in the Northland I am through.

When I am gone, perhaps a few
Of those of whom I better knew
May sorry feel, and even say,
"We miss his face beside the Bay."

Perhaps another poet wight
May stroll by day and sit by night
To watch the waves or hear them beat
Against the piles beneath his feet.
Perhaps he, too, will paeans sing,
And better make his harpstrings ring
In chords that all perforce must hear,
Though care they not to lend an ear.

If such should come, a path is made
Where oft' my strolling feet have
 strayed,

And may he feel the same content
Along the wharves where I have spent
Many a pleasant hour or so,
Joyous if western winds would blow,
Pensive if damp'ning fogs would fall,
But in contentment through it all.

But no two eyes will see the same.
What pleases one is somewhat tame
To others, yet we all agree,
There is enchantment by the sea
That charms us all. I love it well;
I love the calm and stately swell;
The roaring surf; the choppy wave;
The tides that tule marshes lave;
The very air that sweeps the land
And says the sea is close at hand.

'Tis little wonder, then, that I
Should love to stroll the waters by.
The lullaby to me they croon

Is sweeter than the sweetest tune
That brass or string has ever played;
That olden masters ever made.

And "now I lay me down" my pen,
Nor will I finger you again
Until once more I lonely feel,
And once again shall o'er me steal
A great desire to write the things
That rampant through my system
spring.

You need not further patience lend,
My reader, for you've reached

THE END.





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